

Chancellor

The Office of the Chancellor is responsible for overseeing “all things students” and furthering MIT’s mission of “providing its students with an education that combines rigorous academic study and the excitement of discovery with the support and intellectual stimulation of a diverse campus community.” In addition to promoting educational excellence and innovation, the office ensures that all students have access to the resources, opportunities, and support that will enable them to thrive in MIT’s dynamic and inventive learning community.

Many of the activities under the auspices of the Chancellor’s Office are carried out within the units led by the dean for graduate education, the dean for undergraduate education, the dean for student life, and the dean of digital learning. Those activities are detailed in the separate reports from each unit. This report provides an overview of the student body and summaries of the major initiatives overseen directly by the chancellor.

The MIT Student Body

During the 2014–2015 academic year, MIT had a total of 11,319 students. They came from every US state and territory and from 116 foreign countries. The 6,807 graduate students included 2,836 (42%) international students, with the most represented countries being China, India, Canada, and Korea. Women made up 32% of the graduate student population. Approximately one third of MIT graduate students lived on campus.

MIT’s 4,512 undergraduate students came from across the United States and 98 foreign countries. Ten percent of undergraduates were international students, and 46% were women. Underrepresented minority students made up 23% of undergraduates, and approximately 15% of these students will be the first in their family to complete a four-year college degree. Approximately 90% of undergraduates lived in campus residence halls or in fraternity, sorority, or independent living group residences. In 2015, the Institute awarded a total of 3,439 degrees.

Initiatives

AY2015 marked Chancellor Cynthia Barnhart’s first full year in office. Significant progress was made in implementing the major initiatives launched at the outset of her tenure, and new programs and policies were also set into motion. This report summarizes some of the advances in the chancellor’s major areas of focus during the past year: student mental health and well-being, sexual assault education and prevention, educational innovation, and student housing and dining. (Additional details and information on other areas of student life and learning are provided in the separate reports of the student deans.)

Student Mental Health and Well-Being

Chancellor Barnhart continued to work with the MIT community to improve the quality of student life and to ensure that every student feels welcomed, included, safe, and

supported. Similar to many other colleges and universities, MIT has been grappling with an increase in the number of students who report feeling overwhelmed or depressed. In AY2015, we lost valued members of our community to suicide, and the number of student hospitalizations related to mental health issues increased. These realities underscored the importance of students being aware of and making use of the excellent mental health and other support resources available on campus. Several measures are being pursued to increase students' awareness and use of these resources, as follows.

MIT joined the Jed and Clinton Health Matters Campus Program, a four-year (2014–2018) data-driven assessment that helps member institutions identify opportunities to enhance campus programming in the areas of mental health, substance abuse, and suicide prevention. The program “is designed to help colleges and universities promote emotional well-being and mental health programming, reduce substance abuse, and prevent suicide among their students.”

To gather more comprehensive information for the Campus Program's assessment of MIT's mental health and well-being programs, the chancellor invited all MIT students to participate in the University of Michigan's Healthy Minds Study in April and May 2015. This confidential study provides a detailed picture of mental health and related issues in college student populations. The study has been run at more than 100 colleges and universities, which enables the Institute to make useful comparisons with other schools. The 2015 study results will be released in the fall, alongside a series of action steps to spur conversations about student wellness, ensure that people who need help receive it, and provide faculty, staff, and friends with the resources they need to assist students who are struggling.

Together with the presidents of the Undergraduate Association (UA) and the Graduate Student Council (GSC), the chancellor encouraged students to get involved in promoting mental health and healthy behaviors and compiled a complete list of student health organizations and specific projects so that members of our community who need help or want to help would know where to go. The Chancellor's Office also funded a grant program to finance student-developed initiatives that improve mental health and well-being.

A new public awareness campaign, “Don't Struggle Alone—It's Okay to Ask for Help,” will launch at the start of the fall term. With student, faculty, and staff involvement, the campaign seeks to reduce the stigma of mental health illness and to lower barriers to seeking help. The campaign will produce postcards, posters, and separate informational pamphlets for students and faculty members. The “Ask for Help” website will include first-hand accounts from members of the MIT community who have struggled and successfully reached out for help.

A new long-term, holistic student health and wellness initiative sponsored by the Chancellor's Office and MIT Medical will launch this fall. Key components of this initiative, called “MindHandHeart,” will include a steering committee and working groups consisting of faculty, students, staff, and student health and wellness experts. They will be responsible for coordinating and leveraging existing support services,

identifying and launching promising new opportunities for community engagement and innovation, and providing frequent updates on successes, challenges, and overall community impact. Over time, MindHandHeart will help members of our community feel more comfortable asking for help when they need it and build a healthier, stronger community.

Sexual Assault Education and Prevention

Understanding and addressing the effects of sexual assault on the MIT community remained a top priority for Chancellor Barnhart. The chancellor released the results of the Community Attitudes and Sexual Assault Survey (CASA) to the public in October 2014 and called on the MIT community to apply its renowned problem-solving skills to the challenges highlighted by the survey's findings.

Chancellor Barnhart held a community forum in November to discuss the CASA findings, and students launched the "It's on Us MIT" initiative to raise awareness by encouraging community members to learn about sexual assault, think about how to make a positive impact, act when something doesn't feel right, and support the people in our community by listening.

In the months that followed, the chancellor oversaw a number of important actions to confront the problem of sexual assault, including:

- Increasing the number of staff members providing education, advocacy, and services for those who experience sexual assault. This included adding four new positions to MIT Medical's Violence Prevention and Response staff and expanding the Title IX Office by adding one investigator and one education specialist. The Title IX Office was also reorganized to report directly to the chancellor.
- Enhancing education about the links between alcohol abuse and sexual assault. Nearly half of the CASA survey respondents who experienced unwanted sexual behavior indicated that at least one such incident involved being taken advantage of while "too drunk, high, asleep, or out of it." This year the Brief Alcohol Screening and Intervention for College Students (BASICS) program was expanded to include sexual assault prevention information.
- Creating a sexual assault prevention and education task force composed of students, staff, and faculty to review current education and prevention outreach efforts, identify gaps, and explore best practices at other institutions. The task force released its final report in February 2015, outlining a roadmap and specific strategies to address gender-based violence at MIT.
- Implementing the task force's recommendations for expanding outreach to ensure that all students are aware of campus resources, have access to comprehensive sexual health information, and have a basic understanding of gender-based violence and bystander intervention skills. Specific actions include developing educational messages and a social marketing campaign to help correct common misconceptions about sexual assault and building a peer education program focused on healthy sexual choices and relationship

empowerment (developing a bystander intervention and social host program for undergraduate and graduate students living in campus housing; developing a robust campaign focused on reporting options and resources; creating a prevention and education advisory board to coordinate broad, data-driven prevention efforts on campus; and measuring progress through a student survey no later than 2017).

- Continuing the dialogue with the MIT community to maintain momentum in tackling sexual assault. For example, in spring 2015, the task force co-chairs visited with more than 20 campus organizations and student groups. They explained the CASA survey findings and facilitated discussions about what the MIT community can do to improve the campus climate, encourage positive bystander behavior, and reduce the incidence of sexual assault.
- Launching a review of Committee on Discipline (COD) procedures to ensure that MIT's process for pursuing a complaint of sexual assault is streamlined, approachable, fair, prompt, and consistent. The task force of faculty, staff, and students charged with this work carefully reviewed the committee's current procedures, the results of the CASA survey, the relevant legal framework, guidelines from the US Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights, processes at peer institutions, and MIT's existing policies.

In April 2015, the COD task force released recommendations for changes in the way the committee handles student sexual assault cases and invited community members to offer comments and feedback in a community-wide town hall meeting and via email. Final rules will be issued during the fall 2015 term. Changes will include:

- Assigning sexual assault cases to a subset of COD members who have received extensive specialized training
- Increasing the responsibility of professional in-house Title IX investigators in investigating allegations, compiling evidence for COD, and recommending findings of responsibility
- Streamlining the process to allow for faster resolution with no loss of thoroughness
- Ceasing to have student COD members serve on sexual misconduct panels, based on student feedback indicating that having peers hear cases is a reporting barrier
- Providing COD members with guidelines to ensure consistency in the sanctions students may face after having been found responsible for sexual assault

These are just some of the ongoing efforts to combat sexual assault at MIT. We have already experienced some positive outcomes, such as the highest-ever attendance at the many campus events sponsored by community offices and students during Sexual Assault Awareness Month in April.

This year also saw many new events, including a student "hack-a-thon" where student teams worked with content experts to develop innovative sexual assault prevention strategies. In another positive sign that our efforts are having an impact, the results of a student survey conducted

in April 2015 showed that only 6.9% of MIT undergraduate respondents and 3.4% of graduate respondents disagreed with the statement “MIT would take reports of sexual assault seriously.” In comparison with other highly selective universities, MIT’s respondents were less likely to disagree with this statement.

Educational Innovation

MIT was founded as a bold experiment in hands-on, science-based, problem-focused teaching and learning that continues to this day. For more than 150 years, our *mens et manus* approach to education has successfully adapted to new technologies and changing world contexts.

President Rafael Reif has made educational innovation a centerpiece of his administration, challenging the MIT community to seize the historic opportunity “to reinvent the residential campus model and perhaps redefine education altogether.” Chancellor Barnhart is committed to furthering this bold vision and ensuring that MIT students play a central role as both agents and beneficiaries of the innovations called for by the president’s Institute-wide Task Force on the Future of MIT Education.

The [Office of Digital Learning](#) (ODL), led by Dean Sanjay Sarma, has continued to play a central role in implementing many of the task force’s recommendations. ODL is exploring how new models of online instruction might be integrated with on-campus education and has been instrumental in advancing the use of digital tools in MIT classrooms. As of spring 2015, more than 83% of MIT undergraduates had used [Residential MITx](#) for a substantial portion of their coursework in one or more classes.

While leveraging digital technologies, the Institute continued to expand and modernize the tradition of hands-on learning that is the hallmark of MIT’s residential educational experience. MIT has been upgrading and expanding the maker space throughout the campus to facilitate student accessibility and ensure safe practices. New work spaces where students can design and create are being built into the plans for the new and renovated campus housing described below.

Curricular innovations inspired by the *mens et manus* philosophy include a new experimental “mind and hand” freshman seminar that will enroll its first students in September 2015. Designed by Dean for Undergraduate Education Dennis Freeman, the seminar will provide approximately 30 freshmen with the opportunity to learn modern engineering methods while developing projects based on academic material simultaneously learned as part of the General Institute Requirements (GIRs). The seminar will offer a six-credit subject to complement the GIRs with project-based learning.

In 2015, MIT created the MIT-Woodrow Wilson Academy of Teaching and Learning to advance pre-K–12 education by combining MIT’s mind and hand approach to learning with recent breakthroughs in cognitive science and digital learning. The goal is to help develop and support excellent STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) teachers and school leaders around the world. Initial support for this effort

comes from the Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation, which is providing \$9.9 million in seed funding.

Student Housing and Dining: Residential Campus 2030

Transforming how we think about the connection between where students live, the ways they learn, and how they form communities is a central theme of the Chancellor's Office. With campus renewal planning under way, the past year provided an opportunity to shape the direction of MIT residential life now and well into the future.

Substantive input and analysis from the MIT and Cambridge communities over the past five years has created a vision for a new MIT gateway in East Campus/Kendall Square, including new and expanded academic facilities, student housing, and commercial and retail space. The MIT2030 capital plan covers a range of campus housing initiatives, including constructing new undergraduate and graduate housing to increase the supply of beds and allow for renewal of existing housing.

In April, Chancellor Barnhart, Provost Martin Schmidt, and Executive Vice President and Treasurer Israel Ruiz announced several important milestones in the MIT2030 capital plan, including the designation of the site for new graduate student housing. The new site has the capacity to replace all of the housing in Eastgate (201 units) and provide approximately 270 additional units of graduate housing. MIT will complete construction of the new housing prior to closing the Eastgate Apartments. Opportunities for additional graduate student housing in the west campus area continue to be explored.

The chancellor also announced that MIT is evaluating the possibility of developing the Metropolitan Storage Warehouse as a site for mixed-use development. The site could possibly include undergraduate residences, maker space on the first floor, collaborative spaces on the top level, and retail along Massachusetts Avenue and Vassar Street. The Metropolitan Warehouse Advisory Group, led by the Office of the Associate Provost for Space Planning and the Office of Campus Planning, also includes students and a wide cross-section of the MIT community.

Plans for west campus development include creation of a temporary open space landscape on the Bexley Hall site and the renovation of several undergraduate residence halls over the next few years. A new west campus steering committee with student representation is developing a plan to unlock the potential of the west campus and complement the revival of the main and east campuses.

Additionally, the chancellor engaged with the student members of the Chancellor's Office Student Housing Advisory Committee. Committee members, who include representatives from DormCon, UA, GSC, the Panhellenic Association, the Interfraternity Council, and the independent living groups, helped to advance residential campus planning throughout the AY2015.

Students from DormCon, UA, and dining hall dorms are working with housemasters and Division of Student Life staff to conduct a house dining and west campus dining review. The group will make recommendations about student dining, including how

dining options should be enhanced and whether to extend the current dining hall vendor's contract, in February 2016.

Two community meetings on East Campus/Kendall Square planning were held in May to solicit feedback from students, faculty, and Cambridge residents and businesses. Community meetings on the west campus project will be held during AY2016.

Conclusion

Throughout the 2014–2015 academic year, the MIT community worked together to make significant progress in areas that directly impact the quality of student life on our campus. As a result, we are well positioned to build on this progress throughout AY2016 and to ensure that students get the most out of their MIT experience. I am grateful to my student partners, the student deans, and colleagues and staff throughout the Institute for their valuable contributions in helping to achieve our shared goal of strengthening student life and learning.

Cynthia Barnhart
Chancellor
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